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XX.—*Stonehenge; an attempt to explain the above Monument.*  
By Professor S. NILSSON, etc., etc.

[Read June 13th, 1865.]

DURING a visit to England last autumn for the purpose of attending the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science at Bath, I had an opportunity of inspecting a monument, which for many reasons may be considered one of the most remarkable in Europe, viz., the celebrated Stonehenge, in Wiltshire.

As the monument in question must be referred to the same period of culture which I have lately treated in my work, *The Bronze Age*, and at the same time affords new and powerful evidence as to the correctness of the views which I have there advanced, I have considered myself bound to attempt an explanation of it, as connected with my recent publication, particularly as it would appear that in Sweden we have also formerly possessed a monument of a somewhat similar description.

Stonehenge is thirty-four miles distant from Bath, if we take the road which passes through the little town of Warminster. The aspect of the country, which at first appeared fertile and well wooded, became gradually more sterile, and we entered eventually upon a large deserted heath, Salisbury Plain, where no habitations were visible in the neighbourhood. The ground appeared broken in by considerable hollows and eminences. Having ascended one of the latter, Stonehenge was visible far off, above the horizon, and its dark grey gigantic masses became taller as we approached. No description is capable of imparting the impression experienced, when first standing alongside and beneath these colossal remains. Although evidently bearing the impress of the hand of man, their grotesque shape appears so extraordinary, that it is difficult to comprehend their signification. It is easily perceived, however, that they do not accord with the present condition of mankind, but must be referred to generations that have long ago vanished from the earth. Some of these mighty pillars of stone are still standing with their imposts upon them; some are in an inclined position, having been supported in their fall by smaller blocks; others are lying flat on the ground, the whole forming a mass of confused ruins, in which, at first inspection, no order or regularity is visible. There is something mystical

and solemn in these remains of the earliest ages—their origin and purpose have been variously accounted for, but none of these explanations have been generally deemed satisfactory.

Stonehenge was long attributed to the magic arts of Merlin, in the same manner as the cathedral of Lund in Sweden was supposed to be erected by Finn, the giant. This popular tradition expresses the wonder with which this gigantic monument was regarded. Inigo Jones supposes it to be a Roman temple; Dr. Charlton, physician to Charles II, is of opinion that it was erected by Alfred the Great; Dr. Gibson regards it as a British monument; John Aubrey and Dr. Stukeley in 1743 assume it to be a Druidical temple, in which latter opinion Dr. Smith and Mr. King in 1799 concur. Wansey, in 1796, supposes that it was erected in order to perpetuate the treachery of Hengist, who assassinated the British nobles near the spot about the year 450. It has also been considered as a monument raised by the Britons in memory of Boadicea; as a Danish monument, etc., etc. Mr. Browne, who has published a little work on Stonehenge, entitled *An Illustration of Stonehenge and Abury*, the seventh edition of which appeared in 1864, endeavours to refute the opinions of all his predecessors, and positively maintains that Stonehenge is an antediluvian work. Mr. Browne has also brought forward several arguments against the supposition of its being a Druidical temple, some of which are undoubtedly correct. He is also opposed to the opinion entertained by some, that Stonehenge is a work of the Phœnicians, because that people, according to his belief, never settled sufficiently long in the country to enable them to effect such an amazing work; and to prove that the Phœnicians never made any permanent settlement in England, he adduces that they have left behind “no remains whatever of a civil or domestic kind.” It is, however, these two assertions, that we shall endeavour to investigate.

After so many and various endeavours to explain the monument in question, it may reasonably be considered as a rash and futile undertaking to engage upon a similar attempt, and to entertain the hope that upon mature and careful consideration it may in due course of time be found correct. I shall however proceed to make this attempt, but must previously express my conviction, that neither Stonehenge nor any other contemporary monument in Europe can be satisfactorily explained by means of their own remains. The thread of history is broken off, and offers us no guide; other sources of information must be sought out; monuments possessing in one or more respects similar peculiarities must be discovered and compared with each other, by which means they will serve to elucidate each other, and eventually spread a light over the whole. Whilst treating of Stone-

henge, I shall endeavour to employ the comparative method of investigation, with the view of ascertaining to what results it will lead us. I will in the first instance adduce indisputable *facts*, and derive from them, as far as I am able, logical deductions. Whatever has merely the appearance of *probability* will be offered as such, for the reader's decision, as to the value of the evidence it may contain.

Although the remains, as before mentioned, when first inspected, present an irregular assemblage of stones, the nature of the original structure becomes evident when closely examined. The older engravings which we possess are also of material assistance in forming a comprehensive view of the whole. Those which occur in the works of Inigo Jones, Camden, etc., show that the monument was then in a less ruinous condition than at present. With the assistance of these engravings, several more recent authors have inscribed in their works a representation of Stonehenge in its supposed original state.

It has been unanimously agreed, and cannot be questioned, that the structure in its original and complete condition formed a circular temple. The outer circle was composed of thirty upright stones about fourteen feet in height, varying with a breadth of from four to eight feet, and thickness from two and a half to six feet. They were all connected by means of horizontal imposts, each resting upon two of the supports, and united with them by a system of mortise and tenon joints. The extremities of the imposts present a somewhat zigzag outline, by which means they were able to retain a firmer hold of each other. This peculiar arrangement, and the very weight of the stones, would seem to guarantee them against destruction for thousands of years; but time, the all-destroyer, as the poet calls the power which crumbles the Pyramids to dust, has already partially demolished the gigantic Stonehenge. Even the hard sand-stone of which it is composed must gradually crumble when exposed to the variations of the seasons, and the supports in consequence eventually give way.

Although it is highly probable that some designs were originally carved upon the surface of the stones, all these would entirely have disappeared, for the same reason, viz., the action of the temperature. The figures carved upon the stones of the monuments at Newgrange and Dowth in Ireland, are still, easily discernible, since, from their position, they are protected from the weather. The designs upon the stones of the monument at Kivik in Sweden were also plainly visible down to the year 1750, at which period the covering stones were removed. By inspecting the original drawings of the latter monument, it is easily perceived how indistinct these designs have become during

the last century, and had they stood exposed another hundred years to the action of the atmosphere, every trace of the carvings would undoubtedly have disappeared. At Stonehenge, therefore, we find no tracings of carvings upon the stones as upon the other monuments we have mentioned, which might serve as a guide to our investigation. We must consequently derive our explanation from other sources.

Within the outer circle of large stones, but outside the triliths, stands a portion of another circle of stones, some of which are entirely unhewn, of rude form, and from five to six feet in height. The next, and principal part of the structure, is composed of five triliths, each consisting of two upright stones, on which rested a third, united by two mortises on its under surface, with a corresponding tenon on the upper edge of each of its supporters. The first pair of triliths, next the entrance, was about sixteen feet high; the next pair about seventeen feet high, and the great trilith, facing the entrance, is about twenty-two feet high, without including the impost. The two uprights last mentioned are more carefully wrought, and present a more even surface than the others. This trilith, however, has fallen many years ago; it is one of its uprights, that in its fall has stood supported by one of the lower stones. Within the triliths is a row of smaller stones, of chiefly a rude obeliscal form, and within this row, rests upon the ground, a stone about sixteen feet in length by four in breadth; this has been called "the altar-stone," and it has been surmised that the ceremonies connected with the service of the temple were here performed.\*

This temple was consequently of a circular form, and completely open towards the heavens. These are considered characteristic of structures connected with solar worship; the circular form representing the disc of the sun, and the open space above, enabling the priests daily to behold and celebrate the god whom they worshipped.

That Stonehenge was a temple devoted to solar worship, is also confirmed by the observation made upon the spot by Dr. Thurnam. At Midsummer, 1858, he had watched the rising of the sun from "the altar-stone" where he stood, when it was seen to rise precisely over the top of the isolated stone, which is ten feet high, and about 200 feet distant from the entrance to the temple, "apparently intended to direct the observation, at the summer solstice, to the point of the rising of the sun."

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\* I am bound to mention that, in this description, I have chiefly followed the statements of Dr. Thurnam, who has published a short but excellent account of this monument, entitled "*Stonehenge*", being the report of a brief lecture on the spot.

But additional evidence may be adduced to favour the supposition that this temple was devoted to solar worship. I have enumerated several proofs in my work on *The Bronze Age*, that wherever traces of *solar worship* are discovered, they are found in connection with traces of *bronze culture*. For instance, upon the monument at Kivik in Sweden, we may observe upon the stones, the carved representations of bronze axes, as well as the symbolical image of the sun, in the shape of a cone or pyramid; in the barrow at Willfara in Sweden, in addition to bronze articles ornamented with spiral designs, was also found a sacrificial altar, evidently employed for solar worship. The numerous emblems carved upon the stones in the grottoes at Newgrange and Dowth in Ireland, equally attest the connection of solar worship with the bronze age, and I may finally observe, that the concentric markings upon the gravestones found in Northumberland, and described in the *Illustrated London News* of the 19th March, 1864, were by me, in *The Bronze Age*, at once attributed to sun-worshippers, and I was subsequently informed by Dr. Bruce of Newcastle, that articles of bronze, as well as flint, were found upon the spot. I would not wish it to be understood, on this account, that concentric designs are invariably associated with the *bronze age*, since they are frequently found upon articles belonging to the iron age; I would merely infer that they have originated during the bronze age, and been employed to symbolise the sun. They were subsequently merely ornamental, without any inner signification. Since all traces of solar worship in Scandinavia have invariably been found to be connected with the bronze age, it cannot fail to be of interest to scientific inquiry to examine whether Stonehenge is also to be referred to the same age. The remains of Stonehenge are situated not on the summit, but on the declivity of a hill, and surrounded with numerous barrows, to the amount of two or three hundred, so that the temple formed the centre of a great necropolis (Thurnam, p. 6). *In these tumuli, a large number of which have been opened, articles of bronze have invariably been exhumed*, in connection with articles of flint, but never of iron. We may therefore conclude that Stonehenge belongs to that period when bronze was employed for the weapons and implements in Western Europe, which conclusion affords additional proof that the temple was erected by sun-worshippers, and also attests the extreme antiquity of the structure.

It is highly probable that the monument was erected anterior to any burials that were performed in its neighbourhood; but if, as Dr. Thurnam conjectures, people of distinction alone were brought here to be interred, centuries must have elapsed before the graves could have increased to the present number—the most

recent of which, however, must be classed as belonging to the bronze age. But as it can scarcely be entertained, that the bronze age in England extended later than a few centuries before the Christian era, it follows that Stonehenge must be referred to a remote period of the age in question. This necropolis belonging to the bronze age, would therefore seem to me to prove, that the temple in its centre must undoubtedly have been erected long before the period of 100 B.C. which has been attributed to it.

Having, as I presume, established the conviction that Stonehenge was erected and employed by sun-worshippers, it remains to investigate in what manner their worship was performed. Stonehenge is generally supposed to be a monument from the time of the Druids, and connected with their religion. This is also Dr. Thurnam's opinion. The first question naturally arises, were the Druids sun-worshippers in the oldest and original sense of the word?

I must, in the first instance, be permitted to make a remark, which is not only applicable to Stonehenge, but to all monuments of extreme antiquity in Britain as well as Gaul, viz., that in those countries which the Romans conquered, where Roman civilisation was introduced, and the language of the natives became more or less mixed up with that of the conquerors, the greater part of traditions and customs, which even then were of ancient date, have been forgotten, since nothing was considered worthy of interest or handed down in writing to posterity by the Romans, except that which still was extant during the period of their dominion, when the Celtic races inhabited the country, and the religion was Druidical. Cannot we trace the reason for this, from the circumstance that whatever was of pre-Roman origin and profane description, was called Celtic; and whatever was connected with religion, Druidical, as if no earlier race or religion had existed prior to the Celts and Druidism? Such a supposition would evidently be absurd. If we wish to obtain the true interpretation of the most ancient monuments in Europe, we must, in my opinion, search for it in those countries, into which the Roman legions never penetrated, and where the old religious traditions are still extant among the people, for instance, in Ireland and Scandinavia. These countries were never visited by the Romans, and many of their primitive customs and traditions, as well as their language, have been preserved unchanged amongst the people. For this reason, I am of opinion, that if we wish to solve the dark problem of Stonehenge, the clue must be sought in corresponding monuments in Ireland, and perhaps in Scandinavia as well.

After these remarks, we shall proceed to inquire, whether a solar temple like Stonehenge could have been devoted to Druid-

ism, and whether, in fact, the Druids possessed any temples, properly so called. In order to pursue this inquiry, it will be necessary briefly to investigate the religious tenets of the Druids. Amongst the authors who have written upon this subject, and who were living at the period when Druidism was still an extant religion, are Julius Cæsar, Diodorus Siculus, the elder Pliny, and Pomponius Mela. We shall, in the first instance, consult Cæsar, who has written most fully upon the subject, and had the best opportunities of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of the Druids. In *Bell. Gall.*, l. vi, c. 13-18, it is stated that they impart instruction concerning the stars and their movements, the nature of things, the size of the world, and the power and influence of the immortal deities. Their chief doctrine is the immortality of the soul. The Druids possess a despotic power over the people, and they alone are permitted to perform all public and private sacrifices, where human victims are frequently offered up in order to appease the deities. *Mercury*\* is the god they chiefly worship; next to him they reverence Apollo, Mars, Juno, and Minerva. Apollo† is worshipped on account of his power in dispelling diseases.

The Druids assembled yearly, upon a stated time and consecrated spot in Gaul, situated, according to Cæsar, "in finibus Carnutum." This is referred by Dezobry and Bachelet, *Diction. de Biogr. et d'Hist.*, Paris, 1857, p. 838, to the neighbourhood of Chartres, to the south-west of Paris; by other authors, to Dreux, a little to the north of Chartres. It is probable that human sacrifices were here performed, but no other public feasts are mentioned. Generally speaking, the rites of the Druids appear to have been of a gloomy and mysterious description, performed in dark woods or caves; their priests were despotic and austere, but no mention is made of their possessing any temple devoted to the worship of the sun.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. v, c. 31, describes the Druids as the philosophers and priests of the Gauls, and says that they sacrificed human victims, but makes no mention of any Druidical temple.

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\* The Druids are supposed to have called their supreme deity, the creator of all, *Esus*; vide "Hist. de France", par Bordier et Charlton, i, p. 6A. According to these authors, Apollo was considered a subordinate deity by the Druids.

† It is here to be observed, that the sun-god, Apollo, has descended to a lower class of deities. He is no longer here, as amongst the worshippers of Baal, the Lord of all. The retention of his name, however, bears testimony to the earlier existence of a more complete form of solar worship. When the worship of Baal was succeeded by Druidism, several traces of the old religion were retained in the new. This is always the case wherever an ancient faith has been subverted; and, in Scandinavia, traces of the worship of Baal may be still observed.



Pliny, lib. xvi, c. 95, describes the veneration in which they held the mistletoe and the oak on which it grows, and says they performed their religious rites in groves of oak, whence their name of Druids was derived. But Pliny makes no allusion to their temples, nor to their worship of the sun.

Pomponius Mela, lib. iii, c. 2, relates that they imparted their doctrines to their disciples in a cave or in remote forests, but nowhere is any mention made of temples, or solar worship.

We cannot prove upon the authority of those authors who were contemporary with Druidism, and acquainted with its tenets, that the Druids were sun-worshippers, or had temples dedicated to the sun; on the contrary, we find that they performed their religious rites in groves, and imparted the doctrines of their faith in secret grottoes. It follows that the once magnificent temple, now called Stonehenge, and which undoubtedly was devoted to solar worship, was not erected by the Druids, nor connected with their religion; besides which, the Britons in the time of the Druids were not sufficiently advanced in the arts of civilisation to erect so splendid an edifice, in the structure of which, if I am not mistaken, traces of oriental origin may be discerned. Vid. "The Ruins of Persepolis," in Niebuhr's *Reisebeschr.*, ii, p. 122, pl. xix, where several triliths occur, resembling those at Stonehenge; and which is the less surprising, when, as in the sequel we shall show, that the religious ceremonies were equally there celebrated in the oriental manner.

Since the sun temple at Stonehenge cannot have been a Druidical temple, we shall proceed to inquire, if sun-worshippers actually have existed here, and if traces of temples devoted to this worship are anywhere to be found. To guard against possible mistakes, we will commence our investigations in Syria, the oldest and most celebrated home for solar worship.

Herodian relates, l. v, c. 3, that in the town of Emesa in Phœnicia, was a temple dedicated to the sun. He mentions, that the sun, which in the Phœnician language, according to his authority, was called *Helæagabalus*, was chiefly worshipped by the natives, but also by the neighbouring satraps and kings. This temple is described as large and splendid, and valuable presents flowed annually into its treasury. Herodian particularly remarks that there was no image of the god made after the manner of the Greeks or Romans, but in its stead a large stone in the form of a cone. It was of a black colour, and was supposed to have fallen down from heaven; "they declare," he goes on to state, "that it is the image of the sun, and that it has not been formed by human hands."

Upon the once Phœnician island of Gozo, near Malta, there are also to be found the remains of a temple devoted to the wor-

ship of the sun, now called the giant's tower (*torre tal giganti*).<sup>\*</sup> Like all the temples of the sun, it is situated on an eminence, surrounded by a circular wall formed of enormous blocks of stone piled up without any mortar; the diameter of the circle is about 125 feet, or rather more than the diameter of Stonehenge. It is most remarkable, that in this temple, there is also a conical or obeliscal stone, two feet and a half high and one foot in diameter, and evidently intended, like the stone in the temple of Emesa, as a symbol of the sun. A similar image is also carved upon one of the stones of the monument at Kivik in Sweden. The ancient sun-worshippers invariably represented their deity, whose rays spread life and fertility over the earth, under the shape of a cone or pyramid.

But we must not omit to mention another remarkable peculiarity in the giant's tower, in an apartment of which is a shallow circular concavity, imbedded in the floor, with a raised rim, resembling those which are met with in the catacombs of Citta Vecchia. Mr. Badger goes on to state, p. 300: "On the floor are two circular blocks, about four feet in diameter, with a low edge round the circumference." The author describes in the next page another grotto in Citta Vecchia where an exactly similar stone was found. As these stones, which are evidently fashioned by art, are invariably found in all temples connected with the worship of Baal, it cannot be doubted that they were used for some express purpose. The author states, that the remains of the temple at Gozo are of great antiquity, and attributed to the Phœnicians, the earliest settlers upon the island. This temple was also without a roof, like all the temples of the sun.

It cannot fail to impress us with astonishment, that in the extraordinary grottoes of Newgrange and Dowth, we shall meet with exactly similar circular blocks of stone upon the floors, with a low edge round the circumference, as in the catacombs of Malta; even the shallow concavity upon the floor of the giant's tower is also observable at Dowth. As these peculiar stones occur in Ireland as well, we must conclude that they have been used in the performance of the same religious rites as in Gozo—the rites of Baal. A conical stone, resembling those in the Phœnician temples of Emesa and Gozo, has also been found in the grottoes of Ireland. Sir William Wilde states, in *The Beauties of the Boyne*, p. 202: "a slender quarry-stone, five or six feet long, shaped like a pyramid," lay once upon the floor, but it has now disappeared.

We have consequently already discovered important affinities

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<sup>\*</sup> "Description of Malta and Gozo", by G. P. Badger, second edition, Valetta, 1851, p. 363.

existing between the temples of Emesa and Gozo and the caves in Ireland. The conical or obeliscal form of stone was particularly held in great veneration, and was never absent from temples devoted to solar worship. In the temple of Stonehenge these stones of a conical or obeliscal shape are also visible; they form an entire row within the triliths, and surround the altar, undoubtedly the most holy spot in the temple. There is, besides, a remarkable similarity in the construction of Stonehenge and Newgrange. Sir William Wilde remarks, p. 203: "Were we to strip the chamber and passage at Newgrange of the surrounding mould, to remove the domed portion of the cave, we should have presented to us a monument not unlike Stonehenge."

When in the year 1860 I visited Newgrange, I had not yet seen Stonehenge, but I remember that there were horizontal imposts upon the lofty, upright blocks of stone. It would prove of material interest to scientific inquiry, if any eminent English antiquary would investigate the structure of the remains at Newgrange as compared with those of Stonehenge.

Having traced the above affinities which exist in all solar temples, whether in Emesa or England, by which it appears they were connected with identical pagan rites, we shall endeavour to investigate whether these rites were actually performed in all, in the same manner.

We shall begin with a description of the religious ceremonies performed in the temple of Emesa, since we shall thus be enabled to form a tolerably complete idea of the manner in which the worship of Baal was celebrated in the country from which the faith was derived. Herodian relates, *Hist.* l. v, c. 3, that when Heliogabalus (whom he denominates Helæagabalus) was priest of the temple of Baal at Emesa, he celebrated the festival of the sun-god according to the Phœnician manner, and conducted the singing and dancing troop to the music of flutes and various instruments, round the altar.

Heliogabalus, having attained the Imperial dignity, erected a splendid temple in Rome, sacred to his god, Baal (Herodian, l. v, c. 5), where he practised the religious rites in the same manner as at Emesa; and to the sound of music, with Phœnician women, beating drums and cymbals with their hands, led the dance round the altar. These ceremonies are characteristic of the worship of Baal, but the rites of the Druids were never performed in this manner.

The same author, Herodian, also relates, that Heliogabalus also erected a splendid temple in the suburbs of Rome, to which the emperor conducted in person the representation of the god, the conical stone. The festival of the god was celebrated in the same manner, in addition to which the emperor diverted the people

with theatrical representations and chariot races (*ludi curiales et scenici*) ; which latter circumstance the reader will be pleased to remember.

Our next endeavour will be to investigate in what manner the religious ceremonies were performed at Stonehenge, which structure we have already shown was a temple connected with solar worship. Stonehenge, as before stated, was of a circular form, and measuring from the outside of the arcade 100 feet in diameter, it was placed within a larger circle formed by a bank of earth, with a ditch outside, the remains of which are still visible. This outer circle undoubtedly formed the sacred precincts of the temple, and was probably planted with trees, forming the holy grove (*τέμενος*), which was usually an appendage to the temples.

The Greek author, Hecataeus, who lived in the fourth century B.C., describes one of these solar temples. He relates : "That in the ocean, opposite Celtica (Gaul), there is an island, not smaller than Sicily, and inhabited by the Hyperboreans ; the soil is excellent, and the climate temperate. There is a beautiful grove sacred to Apollo (the sun-god Baal), and a splendid temple, of a circular form, and ornamented with many offerings." He states that these Hyperboreans were, from olden times, much devoted to the Greeks, particularly the Athenians and Delians. We are here reminded that the sun-god, Apollo, possessed a temple at Delos, where his oracle was held in great estimation. Hecataeus further relates, that some Greeks (from Delos) had visited the Hyperboreans, and presented valuable gifts to the temple ; and that the Hyperborean, whom he calls Abaris, had travelled to Greece and renewed the old friendship and attachment with the Delians. I must here be permitted to make a slight pause. In the description of this island, Hecataeus undoubtedly designates England. It cannot therefore be disputed that it is in England we must search for the circular temple with the sacred grove dedicated to the worship of the sun.

It is supposed that Stonehenge or Abury are here alluded to. I have not inspected the latter, but have read a description and seen the plates of it in Mr. Long's *Abury Illustrated*, and I very much doubt that the double circular rows of stones which there occur, according to plates iv and v, could be entitled *Ναὸς*, by a Greek author ; on the other hand, Stonehenge has undoubtedly been a real temple (*Ναὸς*), as well as a *ναὸς ἀξιόλογος*, a remarkable temple, as Hecataeus terms it. We must therefore either assume that the temple in question is Stonehenge, or that the entire description is a fable. But it is hardly to be presumed that the fable should so strongly coincide with the reality. Besides which, Herodotus, l. iv, c. 33, had mentioned, more than a hundred years before the time of Hecataeus, the friendship which

existed between the Hyperboreans and the Delians, and he speaks as well of the Hyperboreans, by the name of Abaris, who had come to Greece. But it is evident that Herodotus did not know where the country of the Hyperboreans was situated. The knowledge of Herodotus respecting the amber and tin trade, and in fact all that concerned the west of Europe, was equally vague and indistinct. Before we proceed further, I trust that the reader's conviction will lead him to infer, that the island alluded to by Hecataeus is England, and the circular temple Stonehenge.

We shall now proceed to investigate the religious ceremonies which were here observed, and which are also described by the same author. He states that they who chiefly celebrate the praise of the god daily are called the priests of Apollo, and that they sing his praises to the music of lutes. The priests undoubtedly danced round the altar stone, within the circle of the obeliscal stones, singing their hymns, and playing upon their lutes, although we find no mention of the dance in the fragments of Hecataeus which are extant. The priests of Baal—Apollo—invariably performed their religious rites with song, music, and dance; the songs and music are expressly named—but these were not the characteristics of the dark and awful rites of the Druids. The latter had certainly their bards, who sung the praises of the warriors, inciting them to acts of bravery, and commemorating the deeds of those fallen in battle, but I can nowhere discover that singing or dancing entered into their religious ceremonies.

Hence we must come to the conclusion, that 500 B.C. there existed a circular temple in Britain, in which the sun-god was worshipped in the same manner as Baal in the East, viz., with music and song, and that this temple was Stonehenge. It cannot fail to strike us with surprise, when we further discover, that the manner in which the festivals in honour of Baal were celebrated by Heliogabalus in Rome coincided in other respects with those performed at Stonehenge. We have seen that theatrical representations and *chariot races* were established at the temple of Baal in Rome for the diversion of the people. In the neighbourhood of Stonehenge there are evident vestiges of a spot marked out for similar purposes. The temple, according to the statement of Dr. Thurnam, who has also given a ground plan of the locality, "was approached on the north-east by an avenue, which bifurcated at a distance of about half a mile, one branch of it terminating near a very remarkable cursus or hippodrome, about a mile and three quarters in length. It is conjectured that within this cursus, horse and chariot races took place, and that it was devoted to the games of the people who erected Stonehenge;" or more probably, of those who assembled there for the purposes of religion. Hence, we observe that, in addition to the singing, music, and dancing

*within* the temple, the worshippers of Baal were provided with chariot races outside its precincts; at Stonehenge as well as in Rome, and probably at Emesa.

The worship of Baal in Canaan was performed in a similar manner, from the days of Moses and Joshua, with dance and song. In the First Book of Kings, c. 18, v. 22-40, it is stated, that the prophets of Baal leaped\* upon the altar, and cried aloud (invoked) the name of their God, which, in accordance with their usual practice, signified that they sang hymns to his honour, and invoked his aid.

The feast of Baal was celebrated in the same manner in Ireland. On midsummer eve, bonfires were lighted on the hills, and dancing was kept up around them all the night. In the language of the country, these fires were called "Balsteni." Consequently the Canaanites and Irish equally denominated the sun-god Baal, and lighted fires on the hills, round which they danced, and through which they carried their children.

It is not to be conceived that a solar worship, so intimately agreeing in various details, could arise spontaneously of itself in so widely distant countries—it must have been imported from one country to another. If we turn to Scandinavia, we shall find that the same festival is celebrated there at the same period of the year; the god is, however, called Balder† instead of Baal, but the form of worship is exactly identical. There is every reason to believe that this festival was once generally celebrated in the whole of western Europe, but that it gradually disappeared in those countries where Druidism was in the ascendant, and where Roman civilisation obliterated the more ancient traditions. In Scandinavia, Druids or Druidism are unknown to the people; the rites of Baal-Balder are, on the contrary, not forgotten, they are even occasionally performed. We must therefore come to the conclusion that the worship of Baal, in Ireland as well as Scandinavia, must be derived from the east, since the striking affinities sufficiently prove its oriental origin.

Now it can hardly be questioned, that the remote dissemination of this religion must have been due to the trade which, in distant ages, was carried on between the east and the shores and islands of western Europe.

Dr. George Smith, in his excellent work, *The Cassiterides*, has demonstrated (p. 56) that the Phœnician tin-trade with England

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\* Professor Melin of Lund, has kindly communicated to me the following explanation of this passage. The word here rendered "leaped", literally signifies an undulating motion to and fro, during the dance. It follows that the prophets danced round the altar.

† The sun-god was denominated amongst various nations Baal, Balder, Bel, Belis, Belenus.

commenced *at least* 1200 B.C., and continued for upwards of a thousand years. The same author has also proved, that the Cassiterides of the ancients must be referred to Cornwall. This conclusion coincides with an article which we have lately read, on the mines of England, in which it is affirmed that the mines in Cornwall have been worked for upwards of three thousand years. These mining operations were unquestionably performed by the Phœnicians. Strabo, lib. iii, relates that, in ancient times, the Phœnicians were the only people who traded with the Cassiterides; that they pursued their journey by way of Gadeira (Cadiz), but kept secret their commercial intercourse. This trade was consequently carried on by sea, even from the earliest times, long before Gadeira became the emporium for the trade of the Mediterranean and the Western Ocean. It was pursued in the same manner, at all events, until the termination of the second Punic war, 200 B.C., when Spain was ceded to the Romans. Marseilles was founded 600 B.C., and appears to have commenced trading with the tin-country at an early date.\*

It is, however, unquestionable that the Phœnicians, from the earliest period of their trading expeditions, not only reached Cornwall, but penetrated much further towards the north, as far as Denmark and the southern part of Sweden, from which sources they obtained their amber. It has generally been supposed, up to the present date, that they obtained their amber from the coasts of Prussia: but this supposition has been founded upon two mistakes. In the first place, Weilauff's admirable work on the amber trade of the north has not been sufficiently known, and the public has consequently ignored how great was the supply of this valuable article of trade on the Danish coasts, particularly in former days; secondly, the statement of Pliny has been passed unheeded, that it was not until the reign of Nero that amber was obtained from the Prussian shores. I have treated this subject at greater length in the *Bronze Age*, p. 118-121.

I have already mentioned that Dr. Smith, in *The Cassiterides*, has proved that the Phœnicians traded with England for tin for upwards of a thousand years; yet the same author, p. 2, has affirmed, "that these very Phœnicians have not left behind them a single literary or monumental vestige of their presence in England." Several authors have entertained the same opinion. Amongst others, my friend John Evans has stated, in his masterly work *The Coins of the Ancient Britons*, "that the Phœnician trade with Britain seems entirely to have been confined to

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\* Bochart asserts, in his "Geographia Sacra", p. 220, that it was first called Baret-anac, the tin or lead country, by the Phœnicians, which by degrees became converted into Brettanikus.

barter, since no traces of their presence in the country have as yet been discovered." Another author affirms, that their stay in the country was not long enough to enable them to erect so stupendous a temple as that of Stonehenge.

These authors consequently maintain, that the Phœnician trade with England was confined to barter, which was carried on during occasional voyages. These conclusions merit a closer investigation, because, if the Phœnicians merely visited England as travellers, it follows that they also pursued the same system of barter in the various localities on the Western Ocean which they visited.

Such a commercial system is, however, in direct variance with the manner in which we know from history that they pursued their trade, as long as it was confined to the Mediterranean. For there they gradually took possession of extensive tracts of country and entire islands, and founded colonies in such places as were found suitable for their trade or mining operations. It is difficult to suppose that they would adopt an entirely different system for their commercial enterprise on the Western Ocean. It may also be questioned, whether it was possible for them to carry on their trade from Tyre with so widely distant places as England and Scandinavia, without the assistance of numerous settlements. We must also bear in mind that every state which has attained wealth and power by means of navigation and commerce, has always been indebted to colonies for this preeminence. There cannot, therefore, be any reason for supposing that the Phœnicians pursued a totally different system in their trading operations with the west of Europe. "But," it is affirmed "they have not left behind them a single trace of their presence in this country."

This appears to be the knotty point, which we shall endeavour to investigate—and resolve. We must first inquire, what kind of vestiges we may expect to discover from distant ages, extending back from 2000 to 3500 years, supposing the Phœnicians to have been settled in the country for any length of time. We cannot expect to discover any traces of their habitations. These were probably made of wood, or other perishable materials. Stone houses were first erected at a much later period. We cannot expect to discover Semitic words in the language of the country, since, according to Ernest Renan, *Hist. des langues Semitiques*, p. 196, all traces of the Phœnician language have disappeared in Phœnicia itself, nor can any traces of it be discovered in the Maltese language. Local names which have reference to their religion are however still extant; they are numerous in Ireland, some occur still in Scandinavia, and I presume they are to be found in England.



It has further been said that, supposing the Phœnicians had a settlement in England, we should discover some literary vestiges of their presence. This objection is perfectly unfounded. In Massilia, where they built temples to Baal and Diana, no Phœnician inscription was discovered until a recent period; and a Phœnician inscription has only very recently been found in Sardinia, although this island was so long in their possession. No inscription has hitherto been found in Malta. On the other hand, two have already been found in England; one in Aberdeenshire, deciphered by Dr. Mill, *The Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science*, Cambridge, 1862, p. 147;\* the other, an oval chalcedony (or cornelian) was found at Dundrum near Dublin, and is now preserved in the British Museum; it has been deciphered by Mr. Coxe. The remains, that we may reasonably expect to meet with in those countries, where the Phœnicians made a protracted stay, are naturally those of an enduring nature, calculated to resist the ravages of time, and connected with their religion, such as, 1. *Religious monuments*; 2. *Religious traditions among the people*; and 3. *Ancient graves, with the weapons and ornaments which they contain*. We shall proceed to inquire, whether any such remains of Phœnician origin can be discovered. We must therefore direct our investigations to other monuments which occur.

They are composed of upright stones in various positions, but generally forming a circle. They are of frequent occurrence in Britain and Gaul, and are there supposed to have been Druidical temples, or connected with the religious rites of Druidism. Monuments of another description are formed by three or five upright stones, placed closer together, and supporting a larger block of stone; these are called Druidical altars, and are supposed to have been erected by the Celts. If we open a work with plates of the pre-Roman antiquities in Britain and Gaul, we shall invariably find them denominated "Celtic monuments,—monuments Celtiques," and the same term is indiscriminately applied, alike to the remains from the stone, or the bronze age. We must endeavour to inquire whether this appellation has been correctly applied. Exactly similar circles formed of upright stones, which in England are invariably supposed to be connected with Druidism, are found in many countries where Druidism has never existed, and where the name of Druids is unknown; for instance, in the whole of Scandinavia. We possess also

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[\* Prof. Nilsson appears to be unaware that the pretended Phœnician inscription brought forward at Cambridge was shown to be a Latin inscription of the post-Roman period. The chalcedony said to have been found at Dundrum is probably no more to the purpose.—ED.]

specimens of that form of monument, called in England Druidical altars—they are called Dös or Dyss; and they occur as well in widely remote countries. Since the above was written, my friend Dr. Thurnam has referred me to what he has further imparted upon this subject, in the fourth and fifth decades of the *Crania Britannica*, under the title of “Historical Ethnology of Britain;” but I regret to say, that the result of my investigations of the above work does not permit me to come to the same conclusions as my esteemed friend.

Dr. Thurnam remarks, p. 122, that circles of large stones, like those which we find in England, were employed as places of assembly and for religious purposes from the earliest period, prior to the erection of temples. He refers to several passages where they are mentioned in the Old Testament, and mentions in a note, that the vale of Bethel is even now covered with stones and rocks, some of which are in an upright position, like the Druidical monuments called cromlechs. Dr. Thurnam states, that the altars, pillars, and groves of the Canaanites and neighbouring heathen nations, which the Jews were commanded to destroy, most likely resembled those which existed in their own holy places. Avenues of unhewn stones, compared by De Saulcy with Celtic dolmens, are still visible upon the hills of Moab.\* *Dead Sea*, 1835, p. 546.

Mr. Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 272, describes a circle of unhewn stones a few miles to the north of Tyre, to which the people had ascribed the same legend often met with here, that they were human beings transformed for their impiety to stone. Similar stone circles are also referred to in ancient Greece; for instance, at Hermione, where stood a temple dedicated to Ceres, and where within a circle of huge stones the mysterious rites of Demeter were celebrated. In the description of the shield of Achilles, *Iliad*, xviii, 504, it is stated how the old men sat down to judgment within a circle of hewn stones.

Having now ascertained that monuments of an exactly identical description with those which are called Celtic or Druidical in England, occur in countries where neither Celts nor Druids ever existed, it surely is palpable, that these English monuments *may* be attributed to a people and a religion unconnected with the Celts and Druidism. Will it not be admitted, that it at least is *probable*, that these ancient monuments, which more from *habit* than any sufficient reason, have been denominated Celtic or Druidical, may upon closer investigation be found to be Phœ-

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\* These monuments were erected in honour of Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, supposed to be identical with Baal-Peor or Moloch, but in either case bearing a close affinity to the Phœnician Baal.

nician, and connected with the rites of Baal, like their congeners at Tyre and in the valley of Bethel? This would seem the more probable, as Dr. Thurnam asserts that several of these monuments evidently bear an impress of their oriental origin. He states, that the avenues formed by parallel rows of stones, near many of these sacred circles, must be compared with the dromes of Sphinxes near the Egyptian temples, or the avenues of pillars and other *viæ sacræ*, which formed the approach to some of the temples in Greece and Syria. Dr. Thurnam mentions the *viæ sacræ* at Eleusis and Paphos, and the avenues conducting to the temple of the Syrian sun-god in Gerasa, Palmyra. Besides these remains from the East, Dr. Thurnam also quotes the statement of Artemidorus in Strabo, iv, c. 4, that there was an island near Britain where the sacred rites of Demeter and Proserpine were celebrated in the same manner as in Samothrace. These were performed by the Cabiri, and were of Semitic origin. The ceremony which was there observed of putting out all the fires, and not allowing any on the island to be lighted until the purified light was distributed by the priests, was also observed in Ireland. Several other customs—for instance, the orgies of the Bacchantes, even in a British island, bear evidence of a Semitic origin; and since many of these religious ceremonies have been so deeply implanted amongst the people of the west of Europe, that even now, after the lapse of thousands of years, they have not been completely eradicated, it must be admitted that they could not have been introduced by mere travellers, but by a Semitic people domiciled in the country. That many of these rites, which were characteristic of the worship of Baal—for instance, the bronze sickle, the mistletoe, etc.—became implanted upon Druidism, forms a proof that the more ancient worship of Baal was spread over the whole of Western Europe, and that Druidism is a younger form of that religion.\*

I am inclined to believe, that Cæsar's information, which no doubt he derived from the Druids themselves, is correct; that their tenets (*disciplina*) were derived from Britain, and from thence propagated to Gaul. Rothe, in his work, *On Druiderne, deres væsen och lære*, expressly states, that "*Druidism is peculiar to the British Islands and Gaul*"; at all events, it is exclusively in these countries that these priests have borne the name of Druids, and that the name of Druid is unknown to the east of the Rhine."

It is difficult to decide *when* Druidism arose. As far as I am

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\* The names Baalsemen, the lord of heaven, and Belisama, the queen of heaven, have been found upon an inscription in the south of France. These names are certainly not Druidical.

aware, it is not alluded to by any ancient authors prior to the first century before Christ, and it is probable that it did not originate before the cessation of the intercourse between the East and the West, *i. e.*, two or three hundred years before Christ. I have inferred, that the younger form of religion, Druidism, is of European origin, and have endeavoured to prove that it is not of oriental, and certainly not of Semitic derivation. The Phœnicians and Hebrews, both of Semitic race, had many customs and ceremonies in common. They both equally abstained from the use of pork as food, for Herodian expressly states, l. v, c. 6, "Exceptis suibus, quibus ipse, ut mos est Phœnicibus, abstinebat," and the Hebrews were forbidden its use by the law of Moses. A lamb was considered equally by the Hebrews and Phœnicians as the proper victim for expiatory sacrifices,—hence the paschal lamb. Livy relates, l. xxi, c. 45, that when Hannibal had pitched his camp near Victumuli, he promised a reward to the soldiers, and in order that they should believe in his promise, he swore by the gods and sacrificed a lamb.

These ceremonies amongst the Romans and the Celts were very different. Previous to the battle between the Albans and the Romans, a preparatory sacrifice was made, when a hog was offered up by the priest. *Livy*, l. i, c. 5.

The Gauls, whose religion was Druidical, held the hog in great veneration, and bore an image of the wild boar upon their standards in battle. The Æsty also wore upon their persons images of the wild boar, as connected with their religious worship. Hence, we perceive that a striking difference existed, not only in the nationality, but in the religion, of the worshippers of Baal and the Druids.

I am convinced that if we confine Druidism within its proper bounds, it will become evident to every unbiassed investigator that traces of a more ancient oriental form of worship, and monuments of an older date, than those connected with Druidism, must exist in England as well as in the other parts of Western Europe; or, in other words, *that there are many vestiges which prove that the Phœnicians had been long domiciled in the country.*

As yet we have merely discussed the question from one side, embracing the religious monuments and traditions amongst the people; the subject will become much clearer if we, in connection with these monuments at Stonehenge, Abury, Newgrange, etc., proceed to examine those articles of bronze which are *contemporary* with them. This bronze is neither of British nor Gallic origin—it is not even European. It is undoubtedly derived from the east, to which, from its ornamental designs, we can trace it back. I have treated this subject at length in *The Bronze Age*,

and will merely state that the most beautiful ornaments with their spiral designs, and the most beautiful swords with short hilts, are of the oldest date, and were consequently those which were first introduced amongst the people of the west of Europe, who were certainly not in a condition to admit the possibility of their fabricating these splendid articles. I cannot omit mentioning that, in Bateman's *Antiquities of Derbyshire*, it is stated, p. 10, that the natives of the country were supplied by the Phœnicians in the way of trade with weapons of bronze, which they subsequently were taught to fabricate. This statement is perfectly unfounded. The bronze-people never parted with their arms to the semi-savage natives, since these weapons are never found in their graves. There is a material difference between the graves of the bronze-people and those of the stone-people. Mr. Bateman has been led into this error from the circumstance of articles of stone having been found in the graves of the bronze-people; but as the bronze was very valuable, flint was employed by the bronze-people as well for arrow-heads, javelins, and other projectiles. The graves of the natives can at a glance be distinguished from those of the settlers.

I will, in conclusion, observe that Mr. Brown has very justly remarked that it would be absurd to attribute the erection of so magnificent a structure as Stonehenge to the semi-savage nomadic Britons; and that even an architect of the present day would hesitate in placing the monstrous transverse stone, weighing perhaps about seventeen tons, on the top of the two uprights of the great trilith.

The etymology of Stonehenge has been generally referred to the Anglo-Saxon. Dr. Thurnam admits that "there can be no doubt that the opinion of Dr. Guest, and of the late Mr. Kemble, the eminent Anglo-Saxon scholar, is the true one; namely, that the proper signification of the word was *the stone hanging places*, from their resemblance to a *gallows*." "This ignominious epithet," says Dr. Thurnam, "is a proof that the temple was not erected by the Saxons;" and it may perhaps be added that, at the period of their arrival in England, it was already of so remote antiquity, that all tradition as to its destination had been long forgotten. "These triliths, as well as their denomination *stone-gallows*, are, in an ethnological point of view, particularly interesting for us in Sweden, since we also possess an ancient monument called *stone-gallows*, namely, *Haborg's gallows*, on Osige plain, in the province of Halland, where may be seen the remains of two triliths."

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